

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 SP-02 PA-01 SSO-00 H-01
INR-10 INRE-00 IO-13 NEAE-00 NSCE-00 CIAE-00
SAA-01 /054 W
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FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
TO USUN IMMEDIATE 976
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9135
AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T DAMASCUS 4569

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MOPS, MARR, XF, LE, SY, US
SUBJ: SYRIAN UN PERMREP ON SITUATION IN BEIRUT

REF: (A) USUN 3236, (B) BEIRUT 4574

1. WE AGREE WITH AMBASSADOR PARKER THAT CHOUFI'S VIEWS ARE NOT REPRESENTATIVE OF SARG'S THINKING ON LEBANON. WE HAVE FOUND CHOUFI MUCH BETTER INFORMED ALTHOUGH MORE OPINIONATED ON SYRIAN INTERNAL DYNAMICS THAN ON SYRIAN FOREIGN POLICY.

2. BEIRUT'S DISCRIPTION OF SYRIA'S PRESS TREATMENT OF LEBANESE SITUATION AS A SIDINFORMATION CAMPAIGN AGAINST U.S. APPEARS TO US OVERDRAWN. NOR HAVE WE NOTED SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN RECENT WEEKS BEYOND HOSTILE REACTION TO HOUSE VOTE TO KILL SYRIAN SSA. SYRIAN MEDIA, IT IS TRUE, HAVE ALLEGED LINKAGE BETWEEN EVENTS IN LEBANON AND ME PEACE NEGOTIATIONS, ACCUSING ISRAEL (AND INDIRECTLY U.S.) OF KEEPING POT BOILING IN THE FORMER IN ORDER TO DIVERT ATTENTION AND PRESSURE FORM THE LATTER,

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BUT WE SEE THIS MORE AS STANDARD REVOLUTIONARY RHETORIC THAN AS AN INTENTIONAL DISINFORMATION CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED AGAINST U.S. POLICY IN LEBANON. ON THE CONTRARY, SYRIA HAS CONSISTENTLY WELCOMED DIALOGUE WITH U.S. ON LEBANON AND ADMITTED TO LARGE AREAS OF COMMON INTEREST AND SHARED OBJECTIVES THOUGH WE HAVE DISAGREED ON TATICS TO BE EMPLOYED.

(WE BELIEVE KHADDAM'S AUGUST 3 STATEMENT THAT SYRIA HAD ENTERED
LEBANON "IN SPITE OF WILL OF AMERICA" SHOULD BE READ MAINLY
AS ANGRY RIPOSTE OF HOUSE VOTE.)
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NOTE BY OC/T: DISTRIBUTION COORDINATED WITH MS ROBINSON, S/S-O

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